

I feel the need as a direct telecom industry participant to register my concern that the original intent of the '96 TRA has been woefully diverted. While other countries like Canada, Australia, Korea, Japan and the EC move ahead with mass DSL, cable, etc deployments in a reasonably healthy competitive environment to deliver on these promises, the US founders. We have a competitive and social imperative as a nation (led by the FCC and Congress) to make true video-quality broadband a reality for the majority of Americans. No one who understands the complexities of accomplishing this task would argue that it will take 10 years of consensus-driven policy-making, industry cooperation and tax dollars to achieve this, but RBOC obstructionism, Tauzin-Dingell style rollbacks and telecom policy revisionism is preventing honest debate and progress. Fair and competitive access to monopoly infrastructure is the cornerstone of healthy competition, and it must be insured through policies that enable legitimate access to "existing" copper and fiber assets the RBOCs gained during a monopolistic era. New wires demand new policies, but "virtual" access through CO facilities seems like a reasonable compromise. The success of the cable MSO's is NOT sufficient evidence to suggest the RBOCs should be left alone to pursue their own policies. Competition - through many forms - drives efficiency, innovation and ubiquitous, high-quality Internet access and broadband services. Competition is essential if we expect the Internet to evolve and drive the next generation of social, political and economic innovation.